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ABSTRACT

Two major reasons for this research are given: to examine the influence that training in Glasser's techniques of Reality Therapy and Class Meetings has on teacher and student behaviors; and, to investigate the relationship between teacher affective behaviors and student behaviors, i. e., on-task behaviors, absences, and disciplinary referrals. Eight elementary school teachers received training in Glasser's techniques while eight comparison teachers acted as the control group. The six-week training module is described in this report. Following training, the classrooms of the participants were observed for positive, neutral, and negative factors on verbal, physical, and facial behaviors. Students were observed for work behavior in the classroom. Absences and referrals to the principal were obtained for the three weeks preceding and following the training. Results indicated little significant difference between the affective behaviors of teachers on student behavior in the classrooms of those teachers who received the training and those who did not. (JD)

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THE EFFECT OF INSERVICE TRAINING IN GLASSER'S TECHNIQUES OF CLASS MEETINGS AND REALITY THERAPY ON TEACHER AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR*

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Many teachers are currently using Glasser's techniques of Reality Therapy and Class Meetings and many others are being trained to use them. It is not known what behavior changes may result (Elardo & Elardo, 1976). The current study looks at the influence training in Glasser's techniques of Reality Therapy and Class Meetings has on teacher affective behaviors and concomitantly on student on-task behaviors, percentages of students referred to the principal and student absences.

Secondly, many educators believe intuitively that positive teacher affective behaviors correlate positively with student achievement and negatively with student discipline problems; however, this relationship has not been empirically proven. Researchers have investigated the relationship between teacher and student behaviors (Bell and Davidson, 1976; Powell, 1976). These authors stress the importance of further investigation into the relationship between teacher and student behavior. The current study examines this relationship by looking at teacher affective behaviors, student on-task behaviors, student referrals to the principal and student absences.

METHOD

Participants

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The participants in this study were 16 teachers from 13 elementary schools (K-7) in the Charleston County School District, Charleston, South Carolina. The eight target teachers involved in the training were volunteers. The eight comparison teachers were matched individually with the target teachers in terms of school size and socio-economic status, grade taught, age, race and sex. The teachers in the sample and their principals contracted with investigators at least one month prior to the beginning of the training regarding their commitment to the training and data collection procedures.

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Procedure

Training in Glasser's Techniques of Reality Therapy and Class Meetings was conducted by three trainers. Two of the trainers had been trained by the Educator Training Center (Glasser's Training Center in California). There was a six-week training module as follows:

1. One six-hour inservice training session in Class Meetings.
2. Six-hours (two hours per week for three weeks) demonstrating, observing and critiquing Class Meetings in each target teacher's classroom.
3. Second six-hour inservice training session in Reality Therapy.
4. Six-hours (two hours per week for three weeks) demonstrating, observing and critiquing the use of Reality Therapy in each target teacher's classroom.

The inservice training days were conducted using the following format:

1. Warm-up

   An informal, nonthreatening activity which lasts approximately ten minutes and allows participants to share ideas.

2. Feedback

   During the first session, a brief discussion with the participants about their classroom struture. During the second session, reports (written and oral) from previous training session.

3. Objectives

   A statement of what the participants should be able to do at the end of the session.

4. Content

   A straightforward, rational presentation of the techniques followed by a number of activities to demonstrate the techniques and allow the participants to apply the techniques during the workshop setting.

5. Evaluation

   Written feedback to determine if participants have an understanding of the techniques discussed. If a participant obtains a score of less than 80% correct, the trainers review the techniques privately with participants.

6. Commitment

A contract with each participant regarding the number of times she agrees to use the techniques. A minimum amount of three per week is required.

Instruments

1. Teacher Observation Scale

The Teacher Observation Scale measures ten teacher affective behaviors (Anderson, Calder, Reynolds & Welch, 1976). Each of the affective behaviors is observed during a five second observation period. The next five seconds is used for recording. Six observations for each of the teacher affective behaviors can be obtained per minute. The teacher affective behaviors observed are:

A. Positive Verbal - Making a positive statement to a student or students, such as "Good."

B. Neutral Verbal - Making a neutral statement to a student or students, such as "Turn to page number 4."

C. Negative Verbal - Making a negative statement to a student or students, such as "Stop that" or "Be quiet."

D. Positive Physical - Positive physical contact with a student or students, such as a hand shake or pat on the back.

E. Neutral Physical - General teacher movement which is neither positive nor negative, such as writing on the board.

F. Negative Physical - Negative physical contact with student or students such as holding student by shoulders or pushing student.

G. Positive Facial - Smile.

H. Negative Facial - Frown.

I. Neutral Facial - No facial expression.

J. Other - Teacher not engaged in instructional activity, such as teacher is out of the room.

2. Student Observation Scale of Overt On-Task Behaviors (Anderson, 1973).

Four student behaviors are included on the Student Observation Scale. Using this scale a student is observed for five seconds. The primary behavior of the student is recorded during the next five seconds. The four student behaviors observed are:

A. Attention (A) - Student is physically attending to the task such as looking at the teacher, blackboard, book.

B. Work (W) - Student is or has been working on the task, such as taking notes, underlining.

C. Other (O) - Student is engaged in other on-task behaviors, such as talking to the teacher or a peer about academic materials, volunteering, asking a question, complying to requests or demands from the teacher.

D. Not on Task (N) - Student's behavior is not relevent to the task.

Design

Data was collected during the three weeks immediately preceding the training and the three weeks immediately following the training. Four observers were trained by the investigator in the use of the student and teacher observation scales. Inter-rater reliability was established to at least .80 before beginning to obtain pre-data and reestablished prior to obtaining post-data.

Two observers were in each class during any one 30-minute observation period, simultaneously observing (1) the teacher and (2) 18 randomly selected students. The observers used a tape recorder designed to accommodate two earphones (McQueen, 1975). The dual-earphones provided a means to synchronize the observing and recording. Five-second recording intervals were used.

During any 30-minute observation period, 180 observations of teacher behavior and 10 observations of each of the 18 students was recorded. Five 30-minute observations were made for each class before the training and five after the training.

Student absences and referrals to the principal were obtained for the three weeks immediately preceding training and the three weeks immediately following the training. All frequency data was converted to percentages prior to analyzing. Percentages were used in order to correct for any missing data.

RESULTS

Analysis of variance results for teacher affective behaviors, student on-task behaviors, student absences and discipline referrals can be summarized as follows:

1. Positive, negative and neutral teacher affective behaviors did not change significantly as a result of training in Glasser's techniques.

2. On-task behaviors of students did not increase significantly as a result of training in Glasser's techniques.

3. Discipline referrals did not decrease significantly as a result of training in Glasser's techniques.

4. Student absences did not decrease significantly as a result of training in Glasser's techniques.

There were several significant correlation coefficients. These were:

1. Negative relationship between student on-task behaviors and negative verbal teacher affective behaviors (-.60, $p < .01$).

2. Negative relationship between student on-task behaviors and negative facial teacher affective behaviors (-.46, $p < .01$).

3. Negative relationship between positive facial teacher affective behaviors and percentage of discipline referrals (-.29, $< p .01$).

4. Positive relationship between negative verbal teacher affective behaviors and percentage of discipline referrals (.60, $p < .01$).

5. Positive relationship between negative facial teacher affective behaviors and percentage of discipline referrals (.53, $p < .01$).

6. Negative relationship between neutral facial teacher affective behaviors and percentage of discipline referrals (-27, $p < .01$).

DISCUSSION

There were two major reasons for the research: (1) to examine the influence that training in Glasser's techniques of Reality Therapy and Class Meetings has on teacher and student behaviors and (2) to investigate the relationship between teacher affective behaviors and several student behaviors; i.e., on-task behaviors, absences, and disciplinary referrals.

The problems inherent in the current study should not go without mention. The experimental teachers did not use the Glasser techniques extensively. There was tremendous variability among the teachers; i.e., large standard deviations. No support for implementing the techniques was available from the local school administrator.

The implications of the current research are straightforward. Additional studies should be conducted regarding the effectiveness of Glasser's techniques. Considerations in designing the research should include:

1. Comparing student and teacher behaviors at different grade levels; i.e., grades one and two compared to grades four and five.

2. Comparing training sessions of various lengths; i.e., inservice conducted for several weeks over at least a one-year period compared to inservice conducted for several days over a three-month period.

3. Comparing inservice training in other systems such as behavior modification to training in Glasser's techniques.

4. Comparing teachers of various ages and races; i.e., black teachers compared to white teachers; younger teachers (22-25 years) compared to older teachers (50 + years).

5. Comparing the effect of training in Glasser's techniques for an entire school faculty including the principal to the training of selected teachers from a school.

The reported significant and nonsignificant relationships between teacher affective behaviors and various student behaviors are interesting and support the need for further study. The current study reports only one significant relationship for positive teacher affective behaviors. Several significant correlation coefficients were reported for neutral and negative teacher behaviors.

The implication is that further studies be designed and conducted especially for affective behaviors other than positive. In addition, further research should examine the relationship between teacher affective behaviors and student behaviors taking into consideration student variables of race, sex, intellectual ability and self concept.

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